MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION

CYCLE SAFETY INFO

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STATE MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR LICENSING—1981

Beginning in 1974 the Motorcycle Safety Foundation has annually prepared a listing of state procedures for licensing motorcycle operators. This is the fifth in a series of cycle safety info sheets reporting those practices.

As in the past, a detailed questionnaire was sent to the licensing authorities of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The questionnaire requested information on motorcycle operator license applicant requirements. That information is reported in the table on the reverse side.

This year we are including information on what the states are doing with the **MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR SKILL TEST**, the **MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR MANUAL** and the **MOTORCYCLE KNOWLEDGE TEST.** That information is included in the table in the adjoining column.

The Motorcycle Operator Skill Test

Nearly three years of research has resulted in the development of a new motorcycle operator testing procedure. A study has shown the test works. In comparison with an existing state test, the Motorcycle Operator Skill Test (MOST) showed a 15 percent reduction in accidents. When coupled with a rider training program, accidents were reduced 21 percent.

The MOST contains nine exercises that test the skills riders need to operate safely in traffic. Since the test only requires an area 50 x 125 feet, it can be set up in a parking lot.

The Motorcycle Operator Manual

In addition to the skill test, a new manual is available for motorcycle operators. The Motorcycle Operator Manual (MOM) includes information on proper protective gear, handling different road surfaces and reacting to emergencies. License applicants in a study group increased their knowledge 15 percent by reading the manual. MSF provides free negatives to states adopting the manual.

The Motorcycle Knowledge Test

The Motorcycle Knowledge Test was developed from the contents of the manual. Using multiple choice questions and line drawings, the test emphasizes areas critical to safe riding. MSF will provide the test on slides for states using automated testing machines.

The Foundation's licensing department provides technical assistance and examiner training for states adopting the MOST. A growing number of states are accepting the new licensing tests and manual. Here is a summary of state plans for 1981:

- 6 states are using the MOST;
- 31 states have adopted the MOM;
- 14 states are using all or part of the knowledge test;
- 4 states are planning to use the knowledge test in 1981;
- 6 states are planning to adopt the MOST in 1981.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation's purpose is improving the safety of motorcyclists on the nation's streets and highways. To reduce motorcycle accidents and injuries the Foundation has programs in rider education, licensing improvement, public information and research. These programs are designed for both motorcyclists and motorists. A national, private, nonprofit organization, MSF is sponsored by the five leading motorcycle manufacturers: Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Harley-Davidson.

STATE	ADOPTED MOST	MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR MANUAL	MOTORCYCLE KNOWLEDGE TEST*	RECENT UPGRADE OF SKILL TEST	TOTAL NUMBER STATE LICENSE EXAMINERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF EXAM SITES (INCLUDING PART-TIME SITES)
Alabama	No	No[1]	NO MOTORCYCLE TEST			
Alaska	No	1977	Yes	No	25	35
Arizona	Planned 1981	No[1]	Planned 1981	No	86	41
Arkansas	No	No	No	No	31	17
California	1980	1979	Yes	—	420	210
Colorado	No	1980	Yes	No	175	79
Connecticut	No	1980	Yes	No	70	15
Delaware	No	1979	Yes	Yes	8	4
D.C.	No	No	No	No	9	1
Florida			NO MOTORCYCLE TEST			
Georgia	Planned 1981	1980	No	Planned 1981	129	55
Hawaii	No	No	No	No	20	12
Idaho			NO MOTORCYCLE TEST			
Illinois	No	No	No	No	438	123
Indiana	Planned 1981	No[1]	Planned 1981	—	92	192
Iowa	No	No	No	No	36	140
Kansas	No	1976	Yes	Yes	149	39
Kentucky	No	No	No	No	87	120
Louisiana	No	No[1]	Planned 1981	No	256	123
Maine	No	No	No	No	33	33
Maryland	No	No	Yes	Yes	100	23
Massachusetts	No	No	No	No	200	36
Michigan	No	No[1]	No	No	1,169[2]	223
Minnesota	Planned 1981	1980	No	No	91	97
Mississippi	No	1976	NO MOTORCYCLE TEST			
Missouri	No	No	No	No	148	136
Montana	No	No	No	No	21	56
Nebraska	No	1980	Yes	Planned[5] 1981	50	95
Nevada	1980	1979	Yes	—	30	36
New Hampshire	No	No	No	Yes	27	25
New Jersey	No	No[1]	No	No	67	20
New Mexico	1980	1979	No	—	74	69
New York	No	1979	No	No	158	122
North Carolina	No	No	No	No	265	190
North Dakota	No	1977	No	No	95	66
Ohio	No	1977	No	YES	75	70
Oklahoma	No	No[1]	Yes	Yes[3]	49	122
Oregon	No	No	No	Yes	150	54
Pennsylvania	No	1976	No	No	138	77
Rhode Island	No	No	No	No	9	7
South Carolina	No	No	No	No	111	52
South Dakota	1980	1980	Yes	Yes	52	88
Tennessee	No	1976	No	No	81	102
Texas	No	No[1]	No	No	343	360
Utah	1980	1977	No	—	48	20
Vermont	No	No	No	No	13	9
Virginia	Planned 1981	1980	Planned 1981	No	172	126
Washington	No	1980	Yes	Yes	223	66
West Virginia			NO MOTORCYCLE TEST			
Wisconsin	1980	1980	Yes	—	175	111
Wyoming	No	1977	Yes	No	56	39

[1]Negatives sent. Not in print as of November 1980.
[2]All branch office employees authorized to administer skill tests.
[3]Adopted Motorcycle In-Traffic Test for age 14-15.
[4]Some states have adopted portions.
[5]MIT adoption.

STATE MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR LICENSING PROCEDURES—1981

1981

STATE	SPECIAL LICENSE OR ENDORSEMENT	LEARNER'S PERMIT	DURATION OF LICENSE	MINIMUM AGE WITH DRIVER EDUCATION	MINIMUM AGE WITHOUT DRIVER EDUCATION	MOTORCYCLE SAFETY EDUCATION A PREREQUISITE TO LICENSING	MOTORCYCLE KNOWLEDGE TEST	OFF-ROAD SKILL TEST	IN-TRAFFIC SKILL TEST	CYCLE INSPECTED	RIDER GEAR INSPECTED	REEXAMINATION REQUIRED	Reexamined for: Vision	Knowledge	Off-Street	In-Traffic
Alabama				14												
Arizona	•	•[7]	3	16	16		•	•		•	•[34]	3	•	•	•[11]	
Arkansas	•		2	16	16		•	•		•			•	•	•	
Colorado	•	•[6]	4	16	16[14]		•	•[15]		•	•[34]	4	•			
Connecticut	•	◉ [3]	4	16	18		•	•	•	•	•[34]					
D.C.	•	◉ [3]	4	16	16[46]		•	•	•	•	•	4	•	•[17]	•[17]	•[17]
Florida					15[16]			•[18]	•[18]	•[18]	•[18]	•	•	•		
Hawaii	•	◉ [4]	2/4	15	15		•	•	•	•	•[21]	2/4	•	•		
Idaho				14	16								•			
Indiana	•[44]	•	2/4	16 yr. 1 mo.	16 yr. 6 mo.		•[44]	•[44]				•	•	•		
Iowa	•		2/4	16	18	•[22]	•	•	•[18]	•		2/4	•			
Kentucky	•	◉ [3]	2	16	16		•		•[18]	•	•					
Louisiana	•		2/4	15	15		•		•	•		4	•	•		
Maryland	•	◉ [4]	4	16	18		•	•								
Massachusetts	•	◉ [7]	4	16½	17		•	•	•	•	•	4	•			
Minnesota	•	•[2]	4	16	18	•[22]	•	•	•	•	•	4	•			
Mississippi		•[3]		15	15					•	•					
Montana	•	•[7]	4	15	16		•	•	•	•	•[20]	4	•			
Nebraska	•	•[9]	4	16	16		•		•			4	•	•		•
New Hampshire	•	◉ [1]	4	16	18			•		•	•	4	•			
New Jersey	•	◉ [4]	2	17	17		•	•	•	•	•	•	•[45]			
New York	•	◉ [9]	4		16[28]		•	•[19]	•	•	•	4	•			
North Carolina	•		4	16	18		•	•		•	•	4	•	•[42]	•	
Ohio	•	◉ [7]	4	16	18		•	•		•	•					
Oklahoma			2	14	14[38]		•[25]		•[25]	•[25]	•[25]					
Pennsylvania	•	◉ [5]	2/4		16		•	•		•	•					
Rhode Island	•	◉ [4]	2	16	18	•[37]	•	•		•		4	•			
South Dakota	•		4		14		•	•	•	•	•	•[40]				•
Tennessee	•		2	16	15[30]		•	•	•	•	•					
Utah	•	◉ [3]	4	16[31]			•	•				•	•	•		
Vermont	•		2	16	18		•	•		•	•					
Washington	•	•[9]	2	16	18		•	•	•	•		2[33]	•[33]	•[11]	•[11]	•[11]
West Virginia				16	16					•[18]	•[18]					
Wyoming	•	•[9]	4		16		•	•		•	•	4	•	•	•[11]	

• Mandatory Learner's Permit Required

1 Maximum 30 days.
2 Maximum 45 days.
3 Maximum 60 days.
4 Maximum 90 days.
5 Maximum 120 days.
6 Maximum 150 days.
7 Maximum 6 months.
8 Maximum 8 months.
9 Maximum 1 year.
10 Maximum 2 years.
11 At the examiner's discretion.
12 Age 14-16 restricted to 250cc or less with parental consent.
13 Under 16 restricted to 200cc or less.
14 Learner's permit issued at age 15½ if enrolled in approved course.
15 Off-street except when facility not available.
16 Age 15 restricted to cycle of five brake horsepower—knowledge test only.
17 Age 70-74 required to pass a psychophysical test. Age 75 and over required to pass road test.
18 "Motorcycle only" license applicants.
19 Provided only at select sites.
20 Only helmet inspected.
21 Helmet inspected for applicants under age 18.
22 Under age 18.
23 Age 18 and under effective 1.1.81.
24 Effective 1.1.81, age 15 restricted to motorcycle not exceeding 125cc.
25 Required for age 14-15 (restricted to 125cc or less) and "motorcycle only" applicants.
26 After 40 years of age every third renewal and after 65 years of age every two years.
27 Under age 16.
28 Class 8 (16-18) motorcycle license or permit not valid in New York City; Nassau County has special restrictions.
29 Operators 69 years of age or older required to pass complete examination every three years.
30 Age 14-16 restricted to five brake horsepower or less.
31 Driver education required regardless of age.
32 Under age 17.
33 Every two year renewal period.
34 Only eye protection inspected.
35 Age 16-17 restricted to less than 150cc.
36 Age 14-15 restricted license to and from work and school.
37 Required of all first-time applicants regardless of age.
38 Age 14-15 restricted to 125cc or less.
39 Age 13-15 restricted to under 100cc.
40 For moving violation only.
41 Age 13-14 restricted to under 100cc.
42 Knowledge and skill test if driving record warrants.
43 Only after license expires over 60 days or reinstatement after point revocation.
44 Required effective 1981.
45 Examination every 10 years.
46 Age 16 with parental consent notorized.

This information was assembled by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation licensing department. Licensing authorities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia were directly contacted by MSF for an update on the information listed in this chart.

Although this information was obtained from the most authoritative sources available as of November 1980, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation is not responsible for its accuracy or completeness.